

Portland Harbor Public Involvement

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Kim Cox
Oregon DEQ
Portland Harbor Project Coordinator

cox.kim@deq.state.or.us
503-229-6590



Portland Harbor Background

- Stretch of Willamette River from Swan Island to southern tip of Sauvie Island
- Heavily industrialized for past 100 years
- Many types of industries:
 - ♦ ship repair and maintenance
 - ♦ pesticide manufacturing
 - ♦ wood treating
 - ♦ bulk petroleum storage



Portland Harbor Background

- 1997 - DEQ/EPA joint sediment study
- Spring 1998 - EPA considers listing Portland Harbor on the National Priority List (NPL)
- December 1998 to April 2000 - DEQ works to keep cleanup in state lead
- July 2000 Site proposed for listing
- December 2000 listing is final



Portland Harbor Memorandum of Understanding - Feb 2001

- Establishes inter-governmental project team - EPA, DEQ, 6 tribal governments and 3 natural resource trustee agencies.
- Identifies EPA and DEQ roles re:
 - Sediment Investigation
 - Source Control
 - Tribal Cultural Resources
 - Public Involvement Activities

What's Happening Now?

EPA:

• September 2001 - finalized negotiations with a group of potentially responsible parties to conduct an investigation of the sediments.

• First draft RIFS Workplan provided to Gov't team June 2002

DEQ:

- Have agreements with almost 50 upland sites covering investigation and implementation of source control measures
- Continue to identify additional sites along Harbor that may be sources of contamination
- Developing Source Control Strategy

Early Public Involvement

- December 1998 - June 1999
- DEQ attended over 50 presentations, meetings.
- \$ 10,000 grant available to facilitate community understanding of the Portland Harbor Sediment Management Plan (PHSMP)
- 30 day public comment period for PHSMP, Open House
- Comment responsiveness summary
- Mailing list of about 400

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Early Public Involvement

- July 1999 – June 2000
- Workgroups advised DEQ in development of Remedial Investigation Work plan. Environmental, community, business, tribal representation
- Developed Public Involvement Plan consistent with EPA Guidance for Superfund sites.
- 23 additional meeting, presentations or activities that provided the community information on Portland Harbor.

Early Public Involvement

- September to November 1999
- 25 Community Interviews
 - Broad representation of community – neighborhood groups, industry, river users, schools, environmental groups,
- Most groups aware of Portland Harbor,
- Portland Harbor does not rate high on the list of concerns. More immediate concerns such as traffic congestion, air pollution, sewer overflows.
- Interested in receiving consistent updates on the project

Communication Challenges

- Many cross program, technical issues involved in project – needing coordination!
 - Endangered Species Act
 - Storm water issues
 - Water Quality issues (i.e. TMDL)
 - Sediment evaluation guidance
 - Maintenance Dredging
 - Human health issues - eating fish
 - Coordinate with Oregon Health Department

Communication Challenges

- Historical cleanup efforts on Willamette
 - “Why are we doing this again?”
- Other Local Activities:
 - City of Portland Combined Sewer Overflow project
 - USACE Columbia River navigation channel deepening
 - “Ross Island” - Sand and Gravel mine just upstream from site
 - accepted “contaminated fill”

Communication Challenges

- Federal and State differences:
 - Approach to public involvement
 - Public Records Laws
 - Cultural Resource Protection Laws
 - Acceptable level of risk for carcinogens
- EPA technical, community involvement staff located in Seattle
 - Initial limited local knowledge
 - Limited local accessibility

What's Next?

- Draft RI/FS Workplan and Draft Source Control Strategy
 - educate community
 - allow for input
- Focus on upland work
- Role of CAG – how will this unfold?

Contact Information

- Judy Smith, EPA, Community Involvement
 - 206-553-6246 e-mail: judy.smith@epamail.epa.gov.
 - EPA website: <http://www.epa.gov/region10/>, click on sites
- Kim Cox, DEQ, Community Involvement
 - 503-229-6590 e-mail: cox.kim@deq.state.or.us
 - DEQ web site : <http://www.deq.state.or.us/nwr/ph.htm>
- Travis Williams, Willamette Riverkeeper
 - 503-223-6418
 - Web Site: <http://www.Willamette-riverkeeper.org/>